

# INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

## LESSON FOR MAY 3 THE PRODIGAL SON.

LESSON TEXT—Luke 15:11-32.  
GOLDEN TEXT—"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Luke 15:18.

The parables of Jesus are marvels of unity and condensation, yet no necessary detail is omitted. This, perhaps his most famous, is no exception even though it does carry a double lesson. Who thinks of the older brother when this story is mentioned? Though designated the "Story of the Prodigal," we need to remind ourselves that the word "prodigal" never once occurs in the story. The opening sentence speaks of a father and of two sons. It is really the parable of a perfect father, the unveiling of the true heart of God. Against that background is set off a self-centered son lacking in natural affection. Also, alongside the wayward son is the miserly, selfish one who lacked all the good qualities of his brother, but who was truly a wanderer and out of harmony with God the Father. In the background we see the citizens of the far country who helped this young Jew to his place of want, famine and degradation. Remember, it is our Lord speaking to Jews. When the Gentiles of the far country sent him to feed swine they insulted him by compelling him to get his living through an occupation instinctively repulsive.

### First Fruit of Sin.

The father makes equal partition "divided unto them." (V. 12) though neither son had a right to demand a partition of his estate. At the bottom of the son's request was a desire to have his own way—to be independent of God. He did not go away from home at once, though his heart was already in the "far country."

I. Into the Far Country, vv. 13-16. Fun is the first fruit of sin, and that the son readily found so long as his money lasted (Heb. 11:25). But the consequences followed closely on its trail, for when he had "spent all" he began to be in "want." There are many attractive things about this young man, but those qualities were perverted, they lacked control, they were good servants but bad taskmasters. It is not always physical, temporal want that comes to the sinner, there are deeper and more intense longings—soul want and soul hunger. These always come to the soul away from God. Being in want does not mean that a man's will has been subdued. Some prodigals in the most abject temporal need are as proud as Lucifer, and boast of their rebellion. So he "joined himself to a citizen of the country." He did not belong there—the citizen did. He was set to the most degrading task imaginable for a Jew—feeding swine.

### Like a Lost Sheep.

II. The Home Coming, vv. 17-24. The first step was for the son to stop and really think. That is where salvation always begins—in thinking. He knew he was lost, e. g., out of adjustment, in the wrong place, out of his element and like the lost sheep, "ready to die." He saw his condition, money gone, friends gone, hogs for companions, no food for his sustenance. He saw his value. He was more important than the servants of his father's home. He saw his father's love, already manifested in what had been given him and we faint would believe that when he left home he had the father's urgent plea to return. He saw a way to escape from his present position. All of this after he "came to himself." Before that, impatient, he was morally insane, now he has reasoned, Isa. 1:18. With his reasoning also came the determination to make a full confession. "I will say unto him," not alone confess his need but the fact that he had sinned. This is the only way for a sinner to come to God, Ps. 32:3-5; I John 1:9; Luke 18:13-14. He did not stop with resolving but "he arose and came to his father," v. 20. He expected to apply for a servant's position, but never had the opportunity for the father saw him "a great way off" and "ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." Notice the kiss of reconciliation was given before he even had a chance to confess. In his confession his first thought is that he had sinned against God and then against his earthly father. The father had not once forgotten him; he "had compassion" even though the son was unmerciful to himself and to all of his loved ones. The father kissed him before he was washed or otherwise made presentable.

# STORY OF THE CAPTURE OF VERA CRUZ

## Description of Battle That Resulted in Capture of First Mexican Port.

Vera Cruz, April 25.—American sailors and marines have again proved their valor in the face of a foreign foe, and have, at the same time, given the natives of this town a new idea of the courtesy of American troops.

While the battle that resulted in the taking of Vera Cruz was not a severe one as battles of the past have been counted, it was of a character to test the courage of men who were called upon to face the steel-jacketed bullets of foemen hidden behind walls and on housetops, and before it was over 12 American sailors had paid for the victory with their lives and another 30 were seriously wounded.

While the Mexicans suffered more severely, the number of their casualties has not been ascertained, but the best estimates obtained by Capt. William R. Rush of the battleship Florida indicate that in the engagements of Tuesday and Wednesday their dead amounted to about 150. No person knows how many Mexicans fell wounded, as a large part of them were taken away and hidden by friends.

### Dead Lay in Streets.

In the streets about the plaza Thursday lay fifteen or twenty bodies, a majority of them attired in citizens' clothing. Some of the men evidently had been dead since the engagement of Tuesday, and the tropical heat made their immediate disposal imperative. One of the first orders given after the town had been captured was to bury the Mexican dead in a trench at the sea end of the streets leading from the plaza.

When the city was taken the order was given to advance carefully and search every building for men bearing arms. Scores of prisoners were taken, most of them protesting volubly, many hysterically, that they were not guilty of any unfriendliness whatsoever toward the Americans.

### Expected to Be Executed.

Accustomed as the Mexicans are to their own contending forces shooting immediately all prisoners taken, the captured men could not but believe that they would receive no less drastic treatment at the hands of the Americans.

The guns found in houses were thrown by the marines and bluejackets from the upper balconies of the houses to the pavement below.

The most spirited action of Wednesday was the taking of the naval academy. Aside from that fight there was no definite organized opposition encountered by the Americans.

### Americans Under Hot Fire.

A hot fire was poured into the advancing Americans from the naval college, which for a time held them back, but a few well-directed shots from the cruisers Chester, San Francisco and Prairie tore gaping holes in the stone walls and silenced the rifle fire of the Mexicans inside. The bluejackets then were enabled to proceed with the task they had in hand.

A squad of soldiers, despite the shelling it had received Tuesday, continued to give considerable trouble to the Americans from the Benito Juarez tower. After they had been silenced and removed from the tower it was discovered that the soldiers had continued fighting for lack of ability to do anything else. The shells from the warships Tuesday had torn away the stairway in the tower and the men had been compelled to remain in it.

### Mexicans Evacuate Hotel.

It was not until late Tuesday that the last of General Maas' men on top of the hotel received written orders from outside the city to evacuate their position. The order was obeyed by a portion of the 100 men who were occupying the roof and vantage points in the interior, but a small portion of the band determined to disobey the orders of their superiors and fight to the last. These men, however, surrendered Wednesday morning. A lieutenant who was in command of the Mexicans was led into a prisoner, and although he had fought desperately, he trembled and turned pale in the belief that he would be summarily executed.

None of the American women were mistreated by the Mexicans during their occupation of the building. A few of the women assisted the Mexicans in caring for their wounded.

### Old Tower Held.

In the fighting in the center of the inner harbor, San Juan de Ulua, an ancient stone fortress, flew the Mexican flag throughout the attack. The commandant and 60 armed men and 300 workmen in the navy yard peered from the embrasures at the Pacific, lying 300 yards away, and the other ships shelling the naval academy. In the dungeons remained 500 prisoners, 300 of whom were on the ships

reaching them through a 16-foot stone wall.

Captain Stickney of the Prairie went through the fortress several days ago and found some heavy guns, five torpedoes and a torpedo tube in a corrugated-iron shed outside the wall of the fortress. When the landing of the Americans was ordered Captain Stickney sent word to the commandant of San Juan de Ulua that he would blow him to pieces with the Prairie's guns if he opened fire against the Americans, but that otherwise he would not be disturbed. The commandant replied that he would answer with his cannons if fired on, but that he would not commence hostilities. When the engagement ashore began the commandant hoisted a brilliant new Mexican flag, which flew all day long.

### Americans in Possession.

At ten o'clock Wednesday morning the Americans were in undisputed possession of all the city except the southwest quarter, in which the barracks are situated, and a few outlying districts. At noon they had taken the barracks. When the city prison, which faces the main plaza of the city, was captured, Lieutenant Commander Buchanan of the Florida made an inspection tour through it.

There was great surprise among the Mexicans who had gathered there that the prisoners were not released. They had been accustomed to seeing the victor always release prisoners and then impress them into his army.

Chief of Police Antonio Villa Vicencio was taken prisoner by the Americans shortly after they had occupied the main plaza of the city. It was suggested to him that he continue in his official capacity to direct the city's protective system. He took the matter under advisement.

Had the frightened mayor made up his mind to accede to Admiral Fletcher's suggestion, which was made through Consul Canada, the Mexicans might have been spared the humiliation of being forced from their positions, and undoubtedly a number of lives would not have been sacrificed.

Coincident with the orders for the general advance of the Americans, an aged white-haired Mexican, carrying the white flag of truce, came down a street from the center of the city. He carried a letter to the chief of police, the only authority he hoped to reach, and desired Consul Canada to read it.

### Old Man Makes Appeal.

It was an urgent appeal to the chief of police to call off the snipers and prevent the bombardment he believed would follow if they continued their execution. Even before the messenger had climbed the stairs into the consul's office, Captain Rush was informed of the contents of the note he bore and immediately sounded "Cease firing" and "Halt."

But it was too late. The action had been begun all along the line and it was not considered wise to attempt further measures to stop it. The commanders ordered their men forward at the double quick, which they carried out with a vigor that afterward gave them the city.

Blood-bespattered sidewalks, broken windows and bullet-scarred walls gave the plaza a fearful aspect. Within the Diligence hotel there were 40 Americans, most of them women, who had been there since the commencement of hostilities. When the square was taken they were immediately notified that they might go to other places if they so desired, but that they probably would incur no further danger by remaining in the hotel.

### POLICE CHIEF DEFENDS FLAG

Orders Arrest of Anyone Making Attack on Stars and Stripes.

New Orleans.—Superintendent of Police Reynolds has ordered the arrest of any person making "disparaging remarks about the army and navy and the American flag on the streets of this city." The order was issued when the superintendent was advised that four soldiers in uniform had forcibly dispersed a quintet of street orators, who were haranguing a crowd and charging that the army and navy are subsidized.

### Missionaries Cause Alarm.

New York, April 24.—At the several church mission headquarters in New York word from 50 American missionaries, en route from Mexico City to Vera Cruz, was anxiously awaited. The Methodist Episcopal board of foreign missions received a cablegram stating that all its missionaries in the cities of Pachuca, Puebla and Guanaxtato were safe.

News of the safety of the ten Episcopal missionaries in Mexico under Bishop Henry D. Aves was also received.

New Tribes Found by Explorers. Word has been received that the members of the Amazon expedition of the University of Pennsylvania museum, sent out in March, 1913, are all well after nine weeks of exploring in unknown territory in southern British Guiana.

The party spent many months in territory never explored by white men. New tribes of Indians never before heard of have been discovered and vocabularies made of their languages.

### Opal Beds in Nevada.

Nevada is now among the states that produce gems. The development of the opal beds of Humboldt county has been attended with considerable success, and a quantity of superior gem material has been obtained. The opal is of an unusual type, consisting of dark, translucent mineral with a variety of rich colors. The deposits promise to supply a gem equal if not superior to the opal from Australia.

Berlin has a store where the pictures of women who wish to become brides are displayed.

# It's a Treat

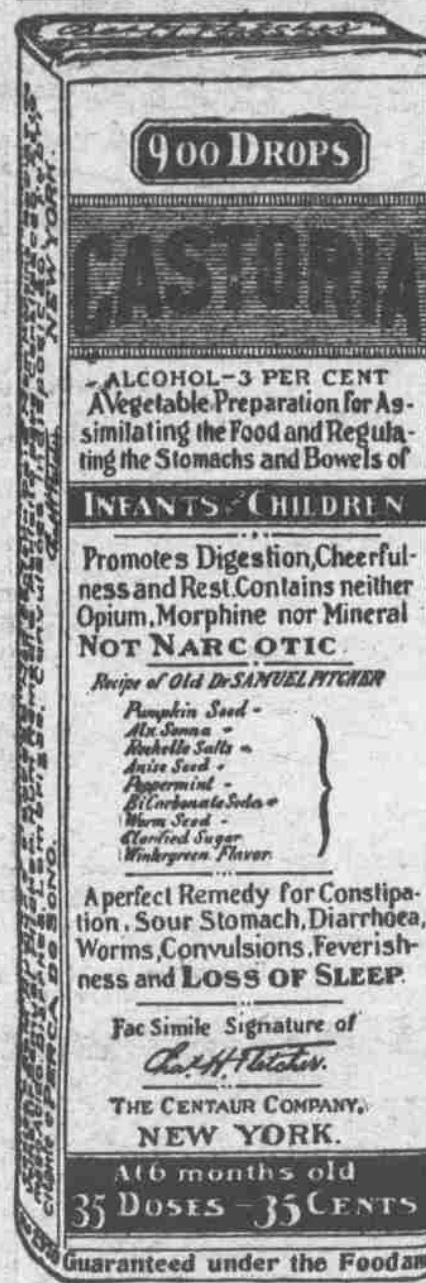
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CLIMAX OF COURTESY.

The extreme of courtesy seemed to have been reached by the owners of a mine in Colorado when they placed at the mouth of the mine shaft this notice:

"Visitors will please not fall down the mine."

However, one visitor who disregarded this polite request and was picked up at the bottom of the first level with some dislocated ribs and a broken arm, outdid even the courtesy of the sign. He said:

"Beg pardon, gentlemen; beg pardon."

### Her Taste.

"I saw that extreme Miss Gaddy at the theater last night with Cholly Phool and she had on a wig of green hair."

"Probably she wanted to match her escort."

Even when he can't make anything else a man can generally be depended upon to make a fool of himself.

It keeps the idle rich busy supplying copy for the sensational journals.

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will put you right in a few days. They do their duty.

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# LINES IN THE FACE Make Women Look Old

and they show the effect of unnatural sufferings—of headaches, backaches, dizziness, hot flashes, pains in lower limbs, pains in groin, bearing-down sensations.

These symptoms indicate that Nature needs help. Overwork, wrong dressing, lack of exercise, and other causes have been too much for nature—and outside aid must be called upon to restore health and strength.

## Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription

The Vegetable Remedy for Women's Ills that relieves nervous exhaustion and irritability and removes other distressing symptoms due to disturbed condition of the delicate feminine organism.

For over forty years it has been used with more than satisfaction by the young, middle-aged and the elderly—by wives, mothers and daughters. You will find it of great benefit. Sold by Medicine Dealers in liquid or tablet form, or send Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., 40 one-cent stamps for trial box by mail.

DR. PIERCE'S PLEASANT PREPARATION Relieves constipation, cleans, regulates the liver, and bowels. Start to take at once.